

codex alimentarius commission

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD HEALTH
ORGANIZATION

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TO: Codex Contact Points
Interested International Organizations

FROM: Secretary, Codex Alimentarius Commission, Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme, FAO, Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00100, Rome, Italy.

SUBJECT: **REQUEST FOR COMMENTS ON THE *PROPOSED DRAFT REVISED CODEX GENERAL STANDARD FOR VEGETABLE JUICES***

DEADLINE: **31 May 2000**

COMMENTS:

To: Dr. Luiz Carlos de Oliveira Secretario de Defesa Agropecuaria Ministerio de Agricultura y Abastecimiento Esplanada dos Ministerios, Bloco D Anexo B - 4 Andar - Sala 406 70 043 - 900 Brasilia - DF Tel.: 55 21 61 218 2314/15 55 21 61 226 9771 Fax: 55 21 61 224 3995 E-mail: luizcarlos@defesaagropecuaria.gov.br	Copy to: Secretary Codex Alimentarius Commission FAO Viale delle Terme di Caracalla 00100 Rome, Italy Fax: +39 06 5705 4593 E-mail: codex@fao.org
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BACKGROUND

1. The *Codex General Standard for Vegetable Juices (CODEX STAN 179-1991)* was developed by the *Joint UNECE/Codex Group of Experts on the Standardization of Fruit Juices*. In discussing the need for including provisions for vegetable nectars in the General Standard, the absence of trade figures on this product was noted and therefore, the Group of Experts decided not to include provisions for vegetable nectars in the General Standard¹. The 19th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (Rome, Italy, 1-10 July 1991) adopted the *Draft Codex General Standard for Vegetable Juices* at Step 8 of its Procedure².
2. The 45th Session of the Executive Committee (Rome, Italy, 2-5 June 1998) noted the abolition of a number of Joint Codex/UNECE Groups and Experts and agreed to abolish the *Joint UNECE/Codex Group of Experts on the Standardization of Fruit Juices* subject to confirmation by the 23rd Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (Rome, Italy, 28 June-3 July 1999). However, the need for revising and updating the standards for fruit and vegetables juices was recognized. In view of this, the 46th Session of the Executive Committee (Rome, Italy, 24-25 June 1999) endorsed the proposal to establish an *ad hoc Intergovernmental Task Force on Fruit Juices* to undertake this work.

¹ ALINORM 89/14, para. 78.

² ALINORM 91/40, para. 281

3. The 23rd Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission confirmed the abolition of the *Joint UNECE/Codex Group of Experts on the Standardization of Fruit Juices*. In accordance with its authority contained in Rule IX.1(b)(i), the Commission agreed to establish an ***ad hoc* Intergovernmental Codex Task Force on Fruit Juices** under specific Terms of Reference.³ It agreed to designate the Government of Brazil to be responsible for appointing the Chairperson of the Task Force in compliance with Rule IX.10 of its Rules of Procedure. It was noted that the establishment of such Task Forces would lead to a more flexible structure to handle specific issues for a time-limited period under closely defined terms of reference, but functioning in the same manner as established Codex Committees.

4. The Codex Secretariat has undertaken the work of revising and updating the ***Codex General Standard for Vegetable Juices***. Amendments to the text are printed with a grey background. Governments and interested international organizations are invited to comment at Step 3 on the attached ***Proposed Draft Revised Codex General Standard for Vegetable Juices*** as directed above.

³ ALINORM 99/37, para. 221.

PROPOSED DRAFT REVISED CODEX GENERAL STANDARD FOR VEGETABLE JUICES
CODEX STAN 179-1991
(At Step 3)

1. SCOPE

This standard applies to all vegetable juices as defined below.

2. DESCRIPTION

2.1 “Vegetable juice” is the liquid unfermented but fermentable product or lactic acid fermented product intended for direct consumption obtained from the edible part of one or more sound vegetables and preserved exclusively by physical means⁴. The juice shall be free from skins, seeds and other coarse parts of the vegetables. It may be clear, turbid or pulpy. It may have been concentrated and reconstituted with water suitable for the purpose of maintaining the essential composition and quality factors of the juice.

2.2 Vegetables for the purpose of the standard are: the parts of edible plants including roots, corms and tubers (e.g. carrots, garlic and potatoes), stems and shoots (e.g. asparagus), leaves and flowers (e.g. spinach, cauliflower) and legumes (e.g. peas). Pumpkins and rhubarb are also considered as being vegetables for the purpose of this standard.

3. ESSENTIAL COMPOSITION AND QUALITY FACTORS

3.1 ORGANOLEPTIC PROPERTIES

The product shall have the characteristic colour, aroma and flavour of the vegetables from which it has been prepared taking into consideration the addition of ingredients and possible lactic acid fermentation. Natural volatile constituents may be restored to the juice. They shall be derived from the same types of vegetables used in the manufacture of the product.

3.2 USE OF CONCENTRATE

The addition of concentrated vegetable juice is permitted.

3.3 BLANCHING AND WASHING

The vegetables shall retain no more water from these operations than technologically unavoidable.

3.4 INGREDIENTS

The following ingredients may be used:

- a) food grade salt, as defined in the Codex Standard for Food Grade Salt (CX-STAN 150-1985, Rev.1-1997);
- b) vinegar, except in vegetable juices treated by lactic acid fermentation;
- c) sugars in dry form and honey as defined in the Codex Standard for Sugars (CX-STAN 212-1999);
- d) seasoning, spices and herbs;
- e) fruit or fruit based products from which the essential elements of the fruit have not been extracted;
- f) whey or lactoserum having undergone lactic fermentation, not more than 100 g/kg.

⁴ For the purpose of this standard and at this time preservation by physical means does not include ionizing radiation.

4. FOOD ADDITIVES

Function	Maximum level
300 L-ascorbic acid	400 mg/kg in the final product
330 Citric acid	Limited by GMP
270 Lactic acid (not in products having undergone lactic acid fermentation)	Limited by GMP
620 Glutamic acid and its sodium or potassium salt	Limited by GMP
296 Malic acid	Limited by GMP
290 Carbon dioxide	Limited by GMP
Natural flavour obtained from seasonings, spices, herbs and fruit juices	Limited by GMP

5. CONTAMINANTS

5.1 HEAVY METALS

The products covered by the provisions of this standard shall comply with those maximum limits established by the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

In particular, the following limits will apply:

	Maximum level
5.1 Arsenic (As)	0.2 mg/kg
5.2 Lead (Pb)	0.1 mg/kg
5.3 Copper (Cu)	5 mg/kg
5.4 Zinc (Zn)	5 mg/kg
5.5 Iron (Fe)	15 mg/kg
5.6 Tin (Sn)	200 mg/kg
5.7 Sum of copper, zinc and iron	20 mg/kg
5.8 Sulphur dioxide	10 mg/kg
5.9 Mineral impurities insoluble in 10% hydrochloric acid shall not exceed	100 mg/kg

5.2 PESTICIDE RESIDUES

The products covered by the provisions of this standard shall comply with those maximum residue limits established by the Codex Alimentarius Commission for the respective vegetables.

6. HYGIENE

6.1 It is recommended that the products covered by the provisions of this standard be prepared and handled in accordance with the appropriate sections of the Recommended International Code of Practice – General Principles of Food Hygiene (CAC/RCP 1-1969, Rev. 3-1997), and other relevant Codex texts such as Codes of Hygienic Practice and Codes of Practice.

6.2 The products should comply with any microbiological criteria established in accordance with the Principles for the Establishment and Application of Microbiological Criteria for Foods (CAC/GL 21-1997).

7. LABELLING

7.1 CONTAINERS DESTINED FOR THE FINAL CONSUMER

In addition to the General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods (CODEX STAN 1-1985, Rev. 2-1999) the following specific provisions apply:

7.1.1 The Name of the Food

The name of the food shall be "x juice" or "juice from x" in which "x" is the name(s) of the vegetable(s) used. In the case of juices made from two or more types of vegetables the product may be called "vegetable juice cocktail". If ingredients are used in quantities which characterize the product a declaration in the name of the food shall be made, e.g. "sweetened x juice" or "spiced x juice". If a juice has been obtained by lactic acid fermentation this fact shall be declared by naming the juice "lactic acid fermented" or by putting the words "obtained by lactic acid fermentation" in close proximity to the name of the food.

7.1.2 List of Ingredients

7.1.2.1 A complete list of ingredients shall be declared on the label in accordance with Section 4.2 of the General Standard, except that water added for reconstitution of concentrates need not be declared.

7.1.2.2 If juices have been made from concentrates, this shall be declared in the list of ingredients as follows: "x juice made from concentrate" or "reconstituted x juice" or "x juice made from concentrated x juice".

7.1.3 Additional Requirements

7.1.3.1 No vegetables or vegetable products may be represented pictorially on the label except those present in the product.

7.1.3.2 Where the product contains more than 2 g/kg of carbon dioxide the term "carbonated" shall appear on the label.

7.1.3.3 No claims shall be made in respect of "Vitamin C" nor shall the term "Vitamin C" appear on the label unless the product contains such quantity of "Vitamin C" as would be accepted by national authorities in the country in which the product is sold as warranting such claim or the use of such term. If this is the case, nutrient declaration shall be in accordance with the *Codex Guidelines on Nutrition Labelling* (CAC/GL 2-1985 (rev. 1-1993) and the *Codex Guidelines for the Use of Nutrition Claims* (CAC/GL 23-1997).

7.1.3.4 Where the vegetable juice has been prepared from raw material treated with ionizing radiation, it shall be labelled in accordance with Section 5.2.2 of the General Standard.

7.2 NON-RETAIL CONTAINERS

Information for non-retail containers shall either be given on the container or in accompanying documents, except that the name of the product, lot identification and name and address of the manufacturer or packer shall appear on the container. However, lot identification and the name and address of the manufacturer or packer may be replaced by an identification mark, provided that such mark is clearly identifiable with the accompanying documents.

8. METHODS OF ANALYSIS AND SAMPLING⁵

⁵ As the methods of analysis and sampling for vegetable juices are the same as those for fruit juices and nectars contained in Table 1 of CL 2000/01-FJ, Request for Comments and Information on the Proposed Draft Codex General Standard for Fruit Juices and Nectars, please refer to that document for information on this Section.